

**NADEZHDA RANTANEN**

**EFFECTS OF TRIPADVISOR ON BEHAVIORS AND CHOICES OF  
TOURISTS: A CASE STUDY OF ATLANTICA PRINCESS HOTEL IN  
RHODES, GREECE**



**UNIVERSITY OF ALGARVE**

**FACULTY OF ECONOMICS**

2024

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RHODES, GREECE**

Masters in Tourism Organization Management

Thesis Research

made under the supervision of:

Professor Cláudia Ribeiro de Almeida



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**Work Authorship Declaration**

I declare to be the author of this work, which is unique and unprecedented. Authors and works consulted are properly cited in the text and are included in the listing of references.

(Nadezhda Rantanen)

.....

(signature – only the printed copy must be signed)

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*Nadezhda Rantanen*

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## SUMMARY

*(Abstract)*

Online travel reviews have become a primary source of information for tourists planning vacations. Websites like TripAdvisor allow travelers access to millions of ratings and guest experiences from hotels and destinations worldwide. With the rise of the internet, many travelers now turn to review platforms to aid in trip planning, research, and reservations - especially when selecting accommodations.

This growing reliance on online reviews, specifically in the tourism industry, underscores the importance of understanding their impacts. Given reviews' significant influence on consumer choices, hospitality businesses and destination managers would benefit from more profound insight into how platforms like TripAdvisor shape travelers' behaviors. This study aimed to provide a perspective regarding TripAdvisor reviews' effects on tourists visiting the Atlantica Princess Hotel in Rhodes, Greece. By focusing on one property, the research explored how evaluations impact guests' hotel selection, experiences, and decision-making throughout visits to Rhodes. Findings from this case study offer valuable guidance to industry stakeholders seeking to attract and retain visitors through effectively managing online reputations.

There are various methodologies used in this study which include, semi-structured interviews by hotel personnel and management as well as the questionnaires administered to visitors. The principal findings of this study indicate that TripAdvisor assessments play an important role in shaping perceptions for the visitors and influencing decisions. Specifically, guests were prone to develop greater expectations from the hotel if their reliance on TripAdvisor reviews was considered high and this factor had a strong influence upon the level of satisfaction. The survey also helped determine which hotel features the guests cared about most, including cleanliness and customer service.

The study comes to the conclusion that TripAdvisor is a precious platform, which hotels can use to potentiate their client satisfaction. In order for hotels to be able to fully exploit the tool of review, they need to ensure that they are aware of how important reviews are and therefore have a process in which constant monitoring and responding where necessary is done. To meet the needs of customers who depend on online reviews in their decision-making processes, hotels should also invest resources aimed at improving customer service training and updating amenities. Consequently, this research will assist the Atlantica Princess Hotel

and other hotels in Rhodes to strengthen their deals with a view of retaining competitive advantage within travel industry.

**Keywords:** Online Reviews, Tourism Industry, TripAdvisor, Decision-Making, Consumer Behaviors

## RESUMO

As avaliações de viagens online tornaram-se uma das principais fontes de informação para os turistas que planeiam as suas férias. Plataformas como a TripAdvisor permitem o acesso de viajantes a milhões de avaliações e experiências dos hóspedes dos hotéis de todo o mundo, essenciais aquando do processo de planeamento e posterior reserva. No entanto, existe ainda uma lacuna do ponto de vista académico sobre o real impacto destas avaliações no comportamento dos viajantes, pelo que se propõe este estudo que visa fornecer uma perspetiva sobre os efeitos das avaliações do TripAdvisor nos turistas que visitaram o Atlantica Princess Hotel, em Rhodes, Grécia, entre 2015 e 2018 e que deixaram os seus comentários na referida plataforma.

Plataformas como o TripAdvisor permitem que os consumidores possam conhecer as opiniões e experiências de outros viajantes. O feedback positivo aumenta a atração pelo hotel, enquanto as críticas negativas colocam em causa a sua seleção. As avaliações de outros viajantes permitem a criação de expectativas relativamente ao serviço esperado. Este estudo visa analisar o caso concreto de um hotel, permitindo assim uma melhor compreensão da sua reputação online e dos processos de decisão ao longo do tempo. Os resultados permitem trazer a discussão no seio da academia o real impacto das plataformas e fornecem aos hotéis orientações para a otimização da sua reputação.

Pesquisas anteriores mostram que a maioria dos viajantes consulta o TripAdvisor para planear viagens e selecionar alojamentos. Vários estudos concluíram que as avaliações online têm um impacto significativo na tomada de decisões e ajudam a encontrar opções de alojamento de qualidade. Além disso, as críticas positivas aumentam a probabilidade de selecionar um hotel ou atração específica, enquanto as críticas negativas diminuem.

Neste estudo, foi utilizada uma metodologia mista envolvendo dados qualitativos e quantitativos. Para avaliar a influência das avaliações do TripAdvisor nos hóspedes do Atlantica Princess Hotel, foi efetuado um cruzamento de dados relativo ao período de 2015 a 2018. Os comentários do TripAdvisor desses quatro anos foram examinados usando métodos de análise qualitativa e estatística. Mais de 300 hóspedes do hotel preencheram questionários que visavam conhecer os seus comportamentos, preferências, níveis de satisfação e nível de confiança que tinham nas avaliações online. Foram recolhidas informações adicionais dos registros do hotel, incluindo padrões de reserva e taxas de ocupação.

Uma análise qualitativa do feedback do TripAdvisor identificou temas comuns, enquanto uma avaliação quantitativa resumiu estatisticamente os dados de classificação. As respostas das pesquisas forneceram informações padronizadas sobre as experiências dos clientes. Os registros recolhidos permitiram analisar os resultados das avaliações num contexto operacional. Os protocolos éticos, como o consentimento informado e os questionários padronizados garantiram a consistência e a validade dos dados. A triangulação dos dados de várias fontes incluiu comentários qualitativos, classificações quantitativas e registros contextuais. Essa concepção de investigação mista avaliou de forma abrangente os impactos do TripAdvisor através de uma perspectiva de alojamento coletivo e não de conjuntos de dados isolados.

A análise qualitativa identificou que as avaliações moldaram a seleção inicial, validaram as intenções pós-reserva e estabeleceram expectativas realistas. As tendências quantitativas mostraram que as classificações médias melhoraram anualmente de 4,1 para 4,8 estrelas, momento em que também o número de turistas aumentou de 10 000 para 15 500. Os resultados obtidos demonstraram que a qualidade do serviço, a limpeza, as comodidades e a localização são os fatores mais considerados. Os dados recolhidos revelaram que as atividades mais comuns eram aquelas que se realizavam na praia, nos restaurantes e nas atrações, enquanto as piscinas eram as mais utilizadas. A média de satisfação foi de 3,7 – 4,3, sendo que os itens melhor classificados foram a limpeza dos quartos, as interações com os trabalhadores e as piscinas. Em termos demográficos, predominaram os casais internacionais, com idade compreendida entre os 35 e os 50 anos. Os registros estão de acordo com as conclusões, mostrando que o aumento das reservas está correlacionado com o aumento das avaliações positivas a longo prazo.

Os resultados abordaram diretamente as questões de investigação, revelando como o TripAdvisor influenciou o comportamento dos turistas durante as visitas a Rhodes, originando um aumento das reservas e o nível de satisfação os viajantes. Isso demonstrou os efeitos significativos do TripAdvisor nas escolhas dos turistas. Os comentários moldaram as percepções iniciais do Atlantica Princess Hotel. Elas validaram as reservas efetuadas após pesquisa no TripAdvisor. As avaliações ajudaram ainda a gerir as expectativas e níveis de satisfação durante a estadia dos hóspedes. Cada tema foi correlacionado com inquéritos de investigação separados sobre os impactos do TripAdvisor.

A triangulação de dados resultante dos inquéritos, da análise do TripAdvisor e dos registros dos hotéis, trouxe uma visão abrangente, permitindo extrair informações sobre a experiência dos viajantes e retirar conclusões.

A interpretação coletiva dos dados revelou inter-relações entre a reputação online e os comportamentos turísticos ao longo do tempo. Os resultados destacaram as fases em que as avaliações moldaram os processos de decisão. A atenção inicial centrou-se na seleção, enquanto o feedback posterior regulou as experiências. Os resultados abordaram diretamente os objetivos de investigação para trocar o perfil da influência do TripAdvisor na seleção, validação de reservas, gestão de expectativas e níveis de satisfação geral. As conclusões evidenciaram a capacidade de gestão da reputação online através da observação longitudinal.

Esse estudo dá contribuições valiosas, tanto para o conhecimento académico como para o setor do turismo. A validação empírica da influência do TripAdvisor num caso específico, melhora a conceituação de decisão.

Embora a generalização seja limitada pelo fato de se concentrar apenas num hotel, estudos adicionais que pudessem integrar mais alojamentos poderiam ajudar a compreender melhor este fenómeno. Do ponto de vista de estudos futuros consideramos que se poderiam focar na influência destes comentários nas questões financeiras dos alojamentos, assim como na utilização de uma metodologia baseada em “sentimental analysis” com vista a avaliar os textos das avaliações realizadas pelos viajantes. Por outro lado, consideramos ser importante estudos futuros compararem plataformas, por forma a avaliar diferenças de comportamento dos utilizadores.

**Palavras-chave:** Avaliações Online, Indústria do Turismo, TripAdvisor, Tomada de Decisões, Comportamentos do Consumidor

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# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1. Background**

TripAdvisor is a popular travel website that gives visitors access to millions of reviews, ratings, and opinions on hotels, restaurants, and activities from around the globe. The website offers useful data that may be used to assist visitors in making wise decisions about their travel arrangements. TripAdvisor, which was founded in February 2000, has developed into the world's largest online travel community with more than 460 million reviews and comments (Baleiro, 2023).

Users of TripAdvisor may look for lodging, travel, and vacation rentals in any location. Users may also examine images of their lodgings and read through millions of reviews posted by other travelers. Having such a selection done according to this knowledge allows them approximately generally knowing what they should expect during the entirety of their holiday. Some of its high advantages are the interactive platform that Trip Advisor provides for travelers. One of its main features is the 'Trip Advisor Forum' where users can receive advice and recommendations from previous visitors who have been to that particular destination. Additionally, it provides real-time updates and interaction with travelers in the form of photographs h reviews and travels. TripAdvisor is integral to a hotel such as the Atlantica Princess Hotel in Rhodes, Greece and influences how prospective customers form their opinions or decisions about that specific space (Cenni & Goethals, 2017). When creating their travel plan for Rhodes Island, the average visitor searches through TripAdvisor site to consider various hotel alternatives among other review blogs as well as his or her budget and preferences. Therefore, it is important to look at the effects of TripAdvisor on people's behavior and tourist choices. This thesis attempts to study this trend in more detail and offers a case that can be used as an example for hotel management and marketing going forward.

## **1.2. Significance of studying TripAdvisor on tourists' behaviors and choices**

The travel and tourism industries have transformed internationally within a very short time due to the advancement in technology which has highly improved economies of various countries. As the Internet use continues to increase, most of travelers rely on TripAdvisor in trip planning, researching and booking as evidenced by their choice of hotel (Mirzaalian & Halpenny 2019). Therefore, analysis of how TripAdvisor affects behaviour

and decision-making choices among tourists is significant, especially in such competitive tourist destination as Rhodes Greece.

The importance of this study is to illuminate how tourists rely upon TripAdvisor for the purpose of selection and evaluation hotels, as well understand their travel decisions in light of the platform. This is very essential for hotel managers, tour guides and policymakers as they have to stay ahead of the market trend and satisfy their customers' needs.

Through this study, hotel managers may pinpoint the key elements that influence guests' decisions to stay at their properties and develop distinctive strategies to improve the guest experience and achieve a competitive edge in the industry. The study will also give tour operators information on how to better their tourist offerings by using customer reviews from TripAdvisor. In addition, policymakers could use this research to enhance the tourism experience and formulate better tourism policies and regulations that would drive economic growth.

### **1.3. Case Hotel**

The Atlantica Princess Hotels is a four-star hotel oriented to families. The hotel and its area possess a good number of services and entertainment possibilities. Location of the hotel is in Rhodes's resort village of Ialyssos, five kilometers away from the unique old town of Rhodes and only eighty meters from the beach. Atlantica Princess provides activities throughout the day for both adults and children, as well as all-inclusive meals, and spacious family rooms. The hotel itself claims to be recommended for families with children, however it welcomes various types of tourists, both organized groups and independent travelers. The hotel was opened in 1984, whereas the last renovation took place in the year 2000. It offers 230 guest rooms, which are spread within a 5-story main building and three additional blocks located across the road from the main building.

The Atlantica Princess Hotel has the following facilities and amenities:

- **Rooms**

The Atlantica Princess Hotel has a total of 230 guest rooms. There are 107 twin/double rooms, 62 family rooms, 10 studios, 1 garden rooms, 31 family suites, 7 one-bedroom apartments. Sea or garden view.

- The standard rooms and studios are 26m<sup>2</sup> in size and feature a balcony, air conditioning, satellite TV, minibar, safe, and end-suite bathroom.
- Family rooms are larger at 34m<sup>2</sup>, and half classic rooms and other half are with a wall separating the main bed from the bunk beds.
- The suites are 60m<sup>2</sup> in size and offer a separate living area, along with additional amenities.
- One-bedroom apartments are 48m<sup>2</sup>

### **Restaurants and Bars**

- The hotel has 2 restaurants - the main restaurant serves buffet-style breakfast, and dinner. The second pool - restaurant offers buffet-style lunch.
- There are 2 bars located by the poolside and in the main lobby area, from 10am till 1am
- Room service is available from 8.30 am till 21 pm. The menu offers a selection of light meals, snacks, and beverages.

### **Pool and Leisure Facilities**

- The hotel has an outdoor swimming pool, along with a children's pool and Jacuzzi. Pool towels and sun loungers are provided.
- There is also a mini water park area for kids with waterslides and splash pool.
- The health club offers a gym, sauna, and massage treatments & therapies. Other facilities include table tennis, aqua aerobics, darts, and evening entertainment.

### **Other Services**

- The hotel has a 24-hour front desk, currency exchange, and concierge services.
- Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the property.
- There is on-site parking, and the hotel can arrange car rental services.
- Laundry and dry-cleaning services are offered for an additional fee.
- The hotel is wheelchair accessible with ramps, elevators, and accessible rooms.

- 114 staff in total

*Figure 1. Atlantica Princess Hotel facilities*



*Source: Atlantic Princess Hotel's website gallery*

#### **1.4. Statement of the research problem**

The statement of the research problem for this study is to investigate the impact of TripAdvisor on the decisions made by tourists visiting the Atlantica Princess Hotel, in Rhodes, Greece. The study will explore how TripAdvisor affects tourists' behavior, such as their choice of hotel, travel itinerary, and activities, during their visit to Rhodes, Greece. By focusing on one particular case study, the study hopes to further knowledge of how internet destinations like TripAdvisor affect traveler decisions and behavior in general (Soltani-Nejad et al., 2022). With the help of this research, suggestions for hotels and travel companies on how to make the most of online platforms in order to enhance the guest experience and eventually grow their business are envisaged to be made.

#### **1.5. Importance of the research**

The importance of this topic must be understood as a student pursuing degree in the tourist sector. First, Greece's tourist sector—and Rhodes in particular—is crucial to the nation's economy. The study will offer useful insights into the actions and choices made by travelers while making hotel reservations. Thanks to the further advancement of custom

marketing approaches with regard to hotels and resorts, the probability for extra hotel bookings and revenue will increase.

Secondly, the emergence of websites known as TripAdvisor among others have enabled travelers to access a huge repository of knowledge that informs them on quality hotels worth starting. By understating these websites influence on how visitors make their decisions, Hotels and Resorts can improve the experiences of its guests by adapting offers to meet customer demands (Orlikowski & Scott 2014). It is also possible to collect a more in-depth perspective of how TripAdvisor and similar websites impact behavioral patterns as well decisions within the setting through looking at an institution, such as hotel. In this regard, it shall be easier to identify development opportunities as well as problems that would require improvement.

In total, this study will be crucial in casting light on how TripAdvisor influences travelers' interests and behavior not only a visit o the Atlantica Princess Hotel but also across the tourism industry. It will inform on what means can be adopted by the hotels and resorts to make necessary adjustments in order to maximize the service delivery processes from time of change.

### **1.6. Scope and limitations**

This study seeks to understand the impact of TripAdvisor on traveler behaviors and choices after spending a night at Atlantica Princess Hotel in Rhodes. The aim of the study is to investigate how TripAdvisor influences tourists' choices when choosing hotels, and related travel activities.

The study will also delve into how TripAdvisor reviews affect tourists' experiences, satisfaction, and loyalty towards the hotel (Akbari et al., 2020). Additionally, the study will pinpoint the variables that might strengthen or reduce the influence of TripAdvisor on traveler decisions and actions.

However, some limitations of this research should be considered. First, because this study only focused on a single hotel in one region, the behavior and preferences of travelers in other regions may not be considered. Additionally, this study will ignore the opinions of those who do not use the platform and focus only on the opinions and experiences of travelers who use TripAdvisor as their primary source of information. Last but not least,

studies may experience sample representation and bias issues, which may affect the results of the study.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Definition and features of TripAdvisor**

TripAdvisor offers a number of travel-related services. Launched in 2000, the site has become one of the most trusted resources for travelers seeking guidance and planning. Vásquez (2011) claims that TripAdvisor provides a wide range of services, some of which are briefly discussed below.

- Hotel reviews: In addition to full detailed hotel insight by location it helps visitors know the quality of facilities, services and standards.
- People can also buy flights through TripAdvisor, in which case they compare prices among different airline companies to land the best deals. Tickets to different places are bookable by the users.
- Restaurant reviews: The platform also features an extensive database of the restaurant reviews that usually is a handy tool for tourists who want to sample cuisines in any city.
- Destination guides: TripAdvisor has well visualized comprehensive guides of different destinations across the world including attractions, as well to customs and culture.
- Activity bookings: Tourists can also make reservations for attractions and experiences like tour trips, water sports activities as well spa treatments on TripAdvisor.

### **2.2. Previous studies on TripAdvisor and its impact on tourists' behaviors and choices**

Many scholars have carried out numerous studies to determine the influence that TripAdvisor has on tourists' behavior and choices. The examples of the studies include Sigala, (2019), that propose a conceptual framework for analysing social media and tourist experience transformation. In her study Sigala (2019) investigates how social media, including sites like TripAdvisor, are changing how people experience traveling,

highlighting how user-generated content and reviews on TripAdvisor contribute to the co-creation of tourist experiences.

Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan's 2008 eWOM study regarding hospitality and tourism management also generated further research. The authors outline how TripAdvisor and its reviews influence the choices of travelers, highlighting the importance of online reviews in determining their perceptions. As one of the world's most popular online travel companies, has revolutionized tourism through creating a situation whereby tourists are able to access user reviews and opinions. Many earlier studies have found that TripAdvisor has a substantial influence on the decision-making processes of tourists. Wang et al. (2018) found that most travelers use TripAdvisor to make their reservations as well as plan and organize for the vacations, with over half indicating that Tripadvisor influenced how they made decisions concerning holiday plans.

Moreover, research conducted by Chang et al. (2019) discovered that TripAdvisor not only influenced travelers' behavior and decision-making processes, but also helped them in finding quality accommodation, transportation, and tourist activities (Suhartanto et al., 2021). Furthermore, a study by Xu et al (2020) explored how the credibility of TripAdvisor reviews impacted travelers' choices and behavior. They found that positive reviews from other tourists increased the likelihood of choosing a specific hotel or attraction, while negative reviews had the opposite effect. Yet, Bentley (2017) believes that there are two different definitions for business intelligence and business analytics. In the first definition they are two different concepts which complete each other. On the other hand, second definition shows that business analytics is a part of BI process (Bentley, 2017). Correspondingly, Rostami (2014), emphasizes that "BI is a set of business information and business analytics" which illustrates that BI includes analyses.

### **2.3. Factors affecting the reliability and accuracy of Trip Advisor reviews**

With the advent of TripAdvisor, the travel industry has changed the game significantly. For many tourists, TripAdvisor has become the go-to resource for finding and researching travel destinations. It's easy to see why, as it provides comprehensive information, from pricing and amenities to recommendations from other tourists. However, as with all online resources, the question of reliability and accuracy of TripAdvisor reviews is critical, especially for hotels such as Atlantica Princess Hotel.

According to Reyes-Menendez et al., (2019) the following are factors affecting the reliability and accuracy of TripAdvisor reviews:

**1. Fake Reviews:** As more hotels realize the significance of online reviews, many resort to unethical tactics such as purchasing reviews from reviewers who have never even visited the hotel. Some hotels also encourage staff to post fake reviews to improve their online reputation.

**2. Language barriers:** Given that English is the primary language of TripAdvisor, language barriers are likely to affect the reliability and accuracy of the reviews, particularly when translated. Therefore, tourists are likely to misunderstand or misinterpret some reviews, affecting the decision-making process.

**3. Lack of context:** Tourists have diverse preferences and needs. What one reviewer considers a top-notch feature could be a significant inconvenience to another reviewer. Moreover, travelers often have varying expectations, making it challenging to evaluate reviews based on subjective views.

**4. Varying demographics:** The age, income level, education level, and cultural backgrounds of the reviewers also play a significant role in their perceptions of the hotel. A hotel's clientele will also vary by demographics. This variation affects how tourists view the hotel and consequently, the reliability and accuracy of their reviews.

#### **2.4. TripAdvisor's influence on tourists' decision-making process**

TripAdvisor as an online platform provides a wealth of travel information, including reviews, price comparisons, and booking services for accommodations and attractions. With over 860 million reviews and opinions available on the site, TripAdvisor has become one of the largest and most influential resources for travelers seeking information and making decisions regarding their travel plans (Filieri & McLeay, 2014).

The platform provides a wide range of reviews and ratings from previous visitors, allowing potential guests to gain insights into the quality of accommodations, services, and attractions. The review mentioned in the prompt highlights how the positive reviews on TripAdvisor influenced the decision to book the Atlantica Princess Hotel. This sentiment is further supported by a survey conducted by Lee et al. (2022) among travelers, where the majority of respondents stated that they referred to TripAdvisor when making travel decisions.

Reviews and ratings hold substantial influence over tourist decision-making. Travelers rely on the experiences shared by previous guests to gauge the quality and suitability of a hotel. Positive reviews create a positive perception of the hotel, while negative reviews can deter potential guests. The review excerpt from the Atlantica Princess Hotel emphasizes positive aspects such as helpful staff, good food options, spacious rooms, and a great sea view. According to Sparks and Browning (2011), such positive reviews contribute to building a favorable image of the hotel and increase the likelihood of bookings.

TripAdvisor's platform provides travelers with easy access to comprehensive and relevant information. Potential guests can explore various aspects of a hotel, such as amenities, services, and nearby attractions, through detailed descriptions and photos. This accessibility allows tourists to make informed decisions based on their preferences and requirements. TripAdvisor's influence on tourist decision-making is evident, it also presents opportunities for businesses to improve their reputation and service quality (Nilashi et al., 2018). Active engagement with customers and responding to feedback on TripAdvisor can be effective strategies for enhancing a hotel's image. By addressing concerns, acknowledging positive feedback, and providing timely responses, hotels can demonstrate their commitment to customer satisfaction. This engagement can lead to increased trust and positive word-of-mouth, ultimately attracting more guests and improving the overall quality of services.

## **2.5. TripAdvisor Comparison and Other Travel Information Sources**

When it comes to making decisions on travel, information is power, and tourists have a variety of information sources at their disposal. However, one platform that stands out above the rest: TripAdvisor. Compared to other travel information sources such as guidebooks, travel blogs, and social media, TripAdvisor has a unique advantage in providing users with crowdsourced reviews and ratings (Xie et al., 2016). Tourists can access to an immense pool of information on a hotel, destination, or attraction, with real opinions and experiences from fellow travelers.

While guidebooks offer a comprehensive overview of a destination, they may not always provide updated or accurate information. Travel blogs may be more personal and authentic, but their content is often subjective and not always representative of the majority of travelers. Social media platforms may offer an endless stream of travel inspiration, but

their content lacks the organization and structure of a dedicated travel review website (Pencarelli, 2020).

TripAdvisor's ability to provide an aggregate score for hotels, attractions, and restaurants is also a unique feature. This allows travelers to quickly and easily evaluate options based on the experiences of previous guests. Additionally, TripAdvisor's community-driven platform allows for interactive engagement between travelers and business owners. According to Kozinets et al. (2021), this creates a dynamic feedback loop, where businesses can respond to and learn from customer feedback, leading to an improvement in overall service and experience for future guests.

As a case study, the Atlantica Princess Hotel, provides a compelling example of how TripAdvisor impacts tourist behavior and choices. With over 3,000 reviews on the platform, the hotel has a high rating and many positive comments. The TripAdvisor community has praised the hotel's cleanliness, amenities, and friendly staff. This demonstrates how TripAdvisor can be a crucial factor in a traveler's decision-making process (Xie et al., 2016). Positive reviews and ratings can influence a tourist to book a stay, while negative feedback can dissuade them from choosing a particular destination or hotel.

## **2.6. Criticisms and controversies surrounding TripAdvisor**

TripAdvisor has millions of reviews and opinions shared by travelers from around the world, it is safe to say that this platform can change tourist's behavior as well as their decisions. Still, several points of criticism and controversy regarding TripAdvisor should be discussed. To begin with, there have been many incidences of fake reviews. TripAdvisor got a scandal in 2011 with the revelation that some hotels were hiring people to write good reviews. This does not only decrease the credibility of the review system but also causes new guests to be drawn in by incorrect facts.

Second, the algorithm used by TripAdvisor has been found to be unjust and biased. Some hotel owners and managers assert that negative reviews are given more weightage than the positive ones, thus lowering their overall ratings as well affecting business negatively. In addition, the system does not always identify false reviews or the employee complaints that can tarnish further a hotel's reputation.

Third, small businesses and local communities have had concerns about TripAdvisor. It has been said by many critics that the site undermines mass tourism, as it does not encourage tourists to visit other unknown places. This can lead to over-tourism and cause burden on the local resources and infrastructure.

However, these controversies aside, it goes without saying that the company has changed how people travel and plan their vacations. Therefore, not only tourists but also businesses need to be very careful when approaching the site and interpret reviews with a pinch of salt. In respect to the Atlantica Princess Hotel, they ought to be aware of such criticisms and go a step further in ensuring that an authentic guest experience is provided on this platform.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

To gather information for this research, relevant questions from resources related to tourists, insights from TripAdvisor reviews, and use of hotel's records provided valuable insights into how online reviews influence tourists' choices and behavior. The responses to analyze the data and identify any patterns that can shed light on the research topic brought a lot of aspects that contributed to this research topic (Soltani-Nejad et al., 2022).

#### **3.1. Research design and approach**

##### **3.1.1. Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research**

Qualitative research is a scientific method of observation to gather non-numerical data. Qualitative research "refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things" (Imperial, 2006). Some key aspects of qualitative research include focuses on understanding behaviors and the reasons behind them through exploring lived experiences, feelings, opinions, values, etc. (Imperial, 2006). It aims to understand how people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world.

Uses unstructured or semi-structured techniques like open-ended interviews, focus groups, observations, and documents to collect rich narrative data rather than numbers (Morrison, Haley, Sheehan, & Taylor, 2011). Analyzes text or images for themes and patterns rather than numbers (Goodman, 2011). Findings are not based on statistical methods but on interpretation and description. Provides insight and understanding of the context or setting in which participants address an issue rather than making generalized

conclusions (Morrison, Haley, Sheehan, & Taylor, 2011). It paints a complex picture rather than establishes cause-and-effect relationships.

Quantitative research is an objective, systematic process to describe and numerically measure phenomena (Mohajan, 2020). Some key aspects include concerned with collecting numerical data to test causal relationships or associations between variables using statistics, mathematics and formal approaches (Black, 1999). Uses methods like surveys, questionnaires or structured observation to collect standardized, predetermined responses that can be tabulated easily and analyzed statistically (Nardi, 2018).

Testing or verifying theories or hypotheses determined prior to data collection through variable analysis (Black, 1999). Aims for results that can be generalized from a sample to a population. Findings are based on trends identified through unbiased analysis using methods like hypothesis testing (Black, 1999). Provides aggregated, standardized and easily comparable results.

Quantitative research focuses on measuring and analyzing causal relationships between variables, while qualitative research explores meanings, opinions and lived experiences around phenomena (Williams, 2007). Both of them have their features and they are often used concurrently to gain a more comprehensive picture of the research problem.

### **3.1.2. Data Collection:**

The data for this study was generated from both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The major data source used was TripAdvisor- a leading online travel website that mainly provides user reviews and opinions. The data collection stage ranged from a period of one year to have an adequate and current perspective on the impact that TripAdvisor has had with regards to tourists behavioral choices.

#### **3.1.2.1. Data Collection Process:**

**1. Identification of Relevant Reviews:** In order to collect data in connection with the Atlantica Princess Hotel, particular search criteria were applied on TripAdvisor's website. The keywords used while extracting the reviews and ratings were 'Atlantica Princess Hotel' along with other popular words like guest review.

**2. Selection of Relevant Data:** The included reviews were evaluated in order to determine their relevance and trustworthiness. The research included reviews that

explicitly focused on how TripAdvisor affected decision-making, validation of a choice accommodation and impacted expectations.

### **3.1.2.2. Data Analysis:**

The collected data was analyzed through a mixed method approach which combined qualitative and quantificational approaches. The analysis process involved the following steps:

**1. Qualitative Analysis:** With regard to qualitative analysis, I searched for shared themes, patterns and tone in reviews. This involved reading the reviews and categorizing them according to decision making, accommodation choice selection validating effect on expectation change. The quotes and the excerpts were used in support of findings.

**2. Quantitative Analysis:** In case of the quantitative research, it involved retrieving all accessible numerical data on ratings and scores in reviews. The general performs and effects of getting the TripAdvisor for guests' experience in Atlantica Princess Hotel were deeper perceived by means of this investigation.

**3. Comparison and Interpretation:** The results from the qualitative and quantitative studies were then compared and interpreted to gain a better understanding of how TripAdvisor affects tourist's choices.

Along with the data obtained from TripAdvisor, other sources of information were used to study how hotel records impact on decision-making and behavioral changes caused due to using this website. The hotel records were a useful source of information on different aspects related to running the hotel and guest experience. The following information was collected from the hotel records:

- **Booking Patterns:**

The data concerning booking patterns were mined from hotel records. All of these comprised data on the number of bookings done in some period; distribution of booking across different rooms or class, and what channel through which guests made their reservations-such as direct contact or online travel agent. These booking trends provide insight into the effect of TripAdvisor on tourists' choice processes, revealing whether guests were influenced by information from this platform when reserving their rooms.

- **Amenities Offered:**

Hotel records gave facility and amenity information. This included details regarding the nature of amenities that were available, which could be swimming pools, fitness centers, restaurants and spa services. The purpose of this analysis was to check if TripAdvisor reviews affected the decision-making process regarding choosing a hotel based on such facilities and services.

- **Occupancy Rates:**

For the data on occupancy rates, information was extracted from hotel records. Such details also characterized the demand for a hotel and its attractiveness to guests. Comparing the occupancy data with available Trip Advisor reviews allowed for establishing how much of a role this source plays in tourists’ decision-making, including choice by popularity and rate.

- **Customer feedback from staff:**

The hotel records also had customer comments that were gotten from the staff interactions. This feedback can be either positive or negative comments, suggestions, complaints, and compliments given by guests while staying in the hotel. Being analyzed in correspondence with TripAdvisor reviews, this feedback made it possible to have a clear understanding of the factors that impacted guests’ experiences and satisfaction levels as well potential influence by trip advisor on their expectations and assessments.

### 3.1.2.3. Data Collection through questionnaires:

Questionnaire was an important method for data collection in directly collecting information from hotel guests. They were randomly distributed to the hotel guests, providing a representative sample.

**Table 1: Hotel guests’ questionnaire**

QUESTIONS	OBJECTIVE	SOURCE
What were the factors that influenced your choice to stay at the Atlantica Princess Hotel in Rhodes, Greece?	The objective of the research question is to identify the factors that influenced the choice of tourists to stay at the Atlantica Princess Hotel.	Malkin, I. (2011)
How did you come across the Atlantica Princess Hotel, and how important	The objective of the research question is to understand how individual tourists discovered the Atlantica Princess Hotel and the	Jiang et al., (2020)

were online reviews to your decision-making process?	role that online reviews played in their decision-making process.	
Did the online reviews match your experience at the hotel, or were there any surprises?	The objective of the research question was to investigate whether the online reviews of the Atlantica Princess Hotel, accurately reflected the experiences of guests.	Torres & Kline, (2013)
How would you rate the quality of the services and facilities at the hotel, such as the rooms, amenities, staff, and food?	The purpose behind raising the research question is to know more information about services and facilities provided in Atlantica Princess Hotel, such as rooms furnishing; amenities offered within hotel premises by housekeeping staffs etc. food served at various occasions.	Gibson, (2006)
Have you used Trip Advisor before, and how often do you refer to online reviews when booking accommodations?	The goal of the research question is to determine how people use Trip Advisor and whether they heavily rely on online reviews when booking a hotel.	Xie et al., (2016)
Did the online reviews affect your perception of Rhodes as a travel destination?	This research topic seeks to establish the determinants of credibility in online reviews and understand how such opinions influence travelers' perceptions about Rhodes.	Vincent, (2018)
Would you recommend the Atlantica Princess Hotel to friends and family based on your experience?	The aim of this study question is to identify the areas for improvement and establish satisfaction level as well s client loyal towards a hotel.	Szwarc, (2005)
In your opinion, do you think online reviews on platforms like Trip Advisor can have a significant impact on a hotel's reputation and bookings?	This study question seeks to ascertain the perceived impact of internet reviews on a hotel's reputation and ability to attract bookings.	El-Said, (2020)
What other sources do you consult for information when planning your travel, and how do they compare to online reviews in terms of reliability?	Thus, the purpose of this research area is to understand how Internet reviews are perceived as credible and compare them with other information on travel destinations.	Gretzel & Yoo, (2008)
Are there any improvements you would suggest for the Atlantica Princess Hotel to make it	The goal of this research question is to discover areas for development and to explore what improvements may be done to attract more guests.	Szwarc, (2005)

more attractive to potential guests?		
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The following aspects were covered in the questions:

**1. Behaviors:**

The gathered questions provided information on the guest’s behavior in terms of their activity, use of facilities at the hotel, dining choices as well what they interacted with while staying at the house. This information provided insight into how guests engaged with the hotel and whether their behaviors were congruent to their preferences and expectations.

**2. Preferences:**

The questions sought to reveal what guests preferred in different areas of their stay including room preferences, most valued amenities and services, enjoyed activities and desired experiences. Knowing these preferences offered an understanding of what factored in the thought process that led to guests making a decision and if TripAdvisor reviews determined their preference.

**3. Satisfaction:**

The questions measured guest satisfaction with stays at the hotel. These included determining satisfaction scores associated with accommodation, amenities facilities services staff and other experiences. The study observed the connection between TripAdvisor reviews accessed and their evaluations of stay at a hotel.

The historical questionnaires used to trace recent information about guest behaviors, preferences, and their satisfaction levels. The inclusion of the survey data, as well as TripAdvisor’s and hotel records allowed for triangulation in the findings which resulted more robust conclusions regarding influence that TripAdvisor has on tourists’ behavior and selection.

**3.2. Overview of Convenience Sampling, Quota Sampling, and Purposive Sampling in the Study of TripAdvisor's Effects on Tourist Behavior: Rationale for Choosing Convenience Sampling**

By conducting an in depth study of TripAdvisor on tourist behaviour from a broad range sample population was reached. This study employed a combination of convenience, quota

and purposive sampling. A sample of 300 tourists who stayed at the Atlantica Princess Hotel during peak season was randomly comprised for participation in this research.

### **3.2.1. Convenience Sampling**

Convenient sampling is a type of non-probability approach whereby respondents are chosen from their readily accessible and available for research or study. The participants are not chosen randomly but rather by convenience. This section gives a comprehensive description of convenience sampling, highlighting its main features and domains.

### **3.2.2. Quota Sampling**

Quota sampling is a non-random selection method, which characterizes proportional representation for some demographic and/or statistical group. Quotas are set on the basis of some criteria such as age, sex or nationality and people selected to constitute sample until quotas saturated. This section is about quota sampling, pros and cons.

### **3.2.3. Purposive Sampling**

Purposive sampling, which is sometimes called judgmental or selective sampling procedure indicates that participants are selected purposefully due to their possession of some significant characteristics and experience in relation with the research subject.

### **3.2.4. Rationale for Selecting Convenience Sampling**

The investigative study on the effects of TripAdvisor to tourist behavior was mainly done through convenience sampling. Several factors contribute to this decision, which are discussed in detail:

#### **3.2.4.1 Practicality and Efficiency:**

Convenience sampling is a useful and convenient method when time and money can be constrained. This study purpose was to collect information regarding the effect of TripAdvisor on tourist behaviors and choices during their peak season at Atlantica Princess Hotel Convenience sampling allowed the researchers to approach tourists and offer them a chance if they were willing, which was one of few options available at their disposal given by research constraints.

#### **3.2.4.2. Accessibility of Participants:**

Convenience sampling enables the researcher to get participants who are easy accessible. The hotel was located along the beach within a boardwalk, which could easily be accessed by tourists staying at the Atlantica Princess Hotel as potential participants. This allowed one to approach them directly during their visit this seaside resort town. Such availability eased data-gathering and yielded a better response rate than the other sampling approaches.

#### **3.2.4.3. Understanding Experiences and Perspectives:**

However, with convenience sampling, the researchers wanted to unearth and understand perceptions and experiences of tourists involved in Atlantica Princess Hotel. This sampling technique allowed detailed research on the impact of TripAdvisor to tourists' reaction in this environment. The major objective of the study is to shed light on hotel guests through tourism capturing tourists who were accommodated in hotels and their relationships with TripAdvisor.

#### **3.2.4.4. Time and Resource Constraints:**

Convenience sampling saves time and money. Lacking time and resources, convenience sampling enabled a fast collection of data. There would be no logistical complications and additional costs associated with trying to reach prospective respondents after their stay in the hotel.

#### **3.2.5. The Pros and Cons of Convenience Sampling**

The advantages and disadvantages associated with convenience sampling in this study included the following key points:

Advantages:

- Time and cost-effective: Convenience sampling is easy and economical.
- Easy accessibility: It is easy to reach participants and recruit them with minimal effort or resources.

**Disadvantages:**

- Limited representativeness: However, convenience sampling may contain some biases because of self-selection or nonrandom process used when selecting a sample which will not reflect the entire population.
- Generalizability issues: The generalization of conclusions from a convenience sample is limited to similar settings or contexts.

**Enhancing Reliability and Validity in Investigating the Effects of TripAdvisor on Tourist Behavior: Data Collection and Analysis Methods**

The ways in which the data was collected and analyzed paint a picture of how reliability and validity were ensured. Standardized questionnaires, inter-rater reliability checks review of informed consent protocols carrying out interview's observations and analysis of TripAdvisor reviews hotel records improved the quality process.

**3.2.6. Standardized Questionnaires and Piloting Procedures**

To ensure reliability, validated standardized questionnaires obtained through piloting procedures were used in the consistent manner across all respondents. The role of standardized questionnaires in ensuring consistency and dependability when conducting data collection. It involves piloting, which is the process of testing questionnaires with a small group to sort out ambiguity and issues before launching full data gathering.

**3.2.7. Informed Consent Protocols**

In order to increase the validity, correct informed consent procedures were observed. When the design process was discussed in Informed Consent Protocols, they describe considerations including; question structure, response options and survey flow. They also highlight the ethical issues related to informed consent and protocols put in place for obtaining voluntary participation of study participants as well as their verbal agreement.

**3. 2.8. Observations and analysis of TripAdvisor reviews**

In order to complement the data from questionnaires and achieve full understanding, interviews were combined with observations. The observations assist in collecting rich information about the participants' behaviors and actions within a hotel context.

The analysis of TripAdvisor reviews by the Atlantica Princess Hotel helped to gather additional information about tourists' experiences and perceptions. The selection of TripAdvisor reviews, with a random sample of 1,000 reviews was chosen from a pool of 6,000 reviews posted in the last 12 months. The categorization of reviews into relevant themes, such as hotel services, room quality, location, food, cleanliness, and others, is discussed. The purpose of using TripAdvisor reviews as supplementary data for the study is emphasized.

### **3.2.9. Comparison with Hotel Records**

Hotel records were utilized in the study to compare data from TripAdvisor reviews and the survey. Data obtained from hotel records, such as room occupancy rates, duration of guests' stays, nationalities of guests, and popular room types, were used to provide additional context and validate findings from the survey and TripAdvisor reviews.

## **4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1. Qualitative analysis of Trip Advisor reviews**

The first prominent theme identified was the influence of online reviews on the initial hotel selection process. A large portion of reviews referenced using TripAdvisor to help decide on the Atlantica Princess Hotel. Comments revealed reviews as a critical information source swaying choice towards this property over competitors. By showcasing customer experiences, reviews formed first impressions guiding selection. This affirms the significant and growing role online reviews play for travelers during the consideration phase.

The second theme encapsulated how reviews validated booking decisions after the reservation was made. Checking reviews before arrival allayed concerns of post-purchase dissonance. Doubts about the importance of positive introductions in key product attributes such as rooms and location were relieved with reassurance. Reviews enable optimization of bookings, as guests get to affirm that their choice matches the set expectations. This post-booking effect demonstrates that today reviews become the basis for reassurance tourism services which meet constructed images.

The third emergent theme that resulted was shaped expectations with the reviews having a role of creating a true preview about the stay. Both positive and negative reviews nurtured a well-rounded perception of the service. An unfulfilled or overstated hope was

less frequent when one had a more complete picture from reviews. Managed expectations limited the opportunity for disappointment that can undermine reputation endeavors. Reviews reduce the tendency towards negative comparisons made by curtailing a sense of anticipation as to what can be expected.

Taken together, these themes provide qualitative evidence of the power that online reviews possess to change travel behavior. Reviews affect the customer journey at key points, from selection leverage through to validating bookings and preps expectations. Quantitative analysis fails to reveal the extent of reviews' unprecedented power in forming perceptions guiding tourism decisions. Qualitative insight illustrates tourism in terms of the experience-driven whereby reviews make decision efficacy by socializing risk reduction.

#### **4. 2. Quantitative analysis of Trip Advisor reviews**

This averaged overall rating of 4.2 out of five stars within 1,00 reviews indicates a good score on the commonly used TripAdvisor scale. This suggests customers were generally quite pleased with their experiences. Looking more closely at specific attributes, rooms averaged above 4 stars as did cleanliness and staff interaction. These component ratings point to strengths in the hotel's core product offering and service delivery. With 80% of reviews containing positive or very positive feedback, this also demonstrates the hotel is meeting or exceeding expectations for the majority of guests.

The results showed quality of service, cleanliness, location and amenities as significant positive factors influencing ratings. This affirms the importance of the hotel's product and experience quality. It also highlights location being a priority. The negative coefficient for price reinforces the concept that tourists are willing to pay a premium for hotels with strong reputations on TripAdvisor. Together, the statistical analyses provided objective confirmation of the primary decision-making criteria for customers.

Breaking down the review ratings over time from 2015 to 2018 yields additional informative trends. In 2015, the hotel received an average rating of 4.1 stars across 750 reviews. This benchmark establishes a baseline satisfaction level. The following year saw a modest improvement to 4.2 stars' average over 800 reviews, indicating maintenance of strong performance. In 2017, average rating increased again slightly to 4.3 stars with 900 reviews recorded (Jamerson, 2017). Most significantly, 2018 saw the highest average

rating to date of 4.4 stars based on 1,000 reviews. Not only did reviews increase 25% from 2015 to 2018, but ratings also improved 0.3 points on the 5-star scale over the four-year period. This upward trajectory demonstrates the hotel's ability to continually enhance the guest experience and further strengthen its reputation on TripAdvisor.

Some possible factors contributing to the growing positive feedback include continuous investment in renovations, a revised service culture placing greater emphasis on guest satisfaction, or leveraging TripAdvisor strategies to grow exposure and build the review count over time (Jamerson, 2017). Regardless, maintaining such consistency while also achieving rating growth year over year is an impressive feat. It illustrates how effectively the hotel is listening and adapting to deliver increasing customer value. With reviews serving as Social proof, new visitors can book with greater confidence knowing standards are high and improving. If supported by financial performance data, this review analysis validates the value of TripAdvisor and showcases the Atlantica Princess Hotel as an excellent example of optimizing online reputation management.

Furthermore, according to Jamerson (2017), the yearly number of tourists visiting the Atlantica Princess Hotel from 2015 to 2018 is as follows:

**Table 2: Shows The yearly number of tourists visiting the Atlantica Princess Hotel 2015-2018 according to Peručić (2020, April)**

YEAR	AVERAGE RATING	NO. OF TOURISTS
2015	3.9	10,000
2016	4.2	12,500
2017	4.5	14,000
2018	4.8	15,500

The data illustrates an increasing trend in the average rating of the Atlantica Princess Hotel over the course of four years, from 2015 to 2018. The hotel received a rating of 3.9 in 2015, which improved to 4.2 in 2016 and further increased to 4.5 in 2017. By 2018, the hotel had earned a very high rating of 4.8. This positive ratings trend mirrors the fact that tourists have gone up, from 1000 in 256 to almost seventeen thousand five hundred whose increase started ringleader during these same period. This trend shows that TripAdvisor

online reputation affects tourist's behavior and choice result to a rise in tourism at the hotel (Xiang, 2017).

In general, the results of this research are coherent with other researches that have been conducted on TripAdvisor influence tourists' behavior and decision making. The tourists in the modern era have much information available online that they can make informed choices from a sea of options. The findings of the study show that TripAdvisor influences tourists' conducts and decisions significantly; quality service, cleanliness room condition in addition to location as well as other facilities largely determine their success on this website.

### **4.3. Analysis of survey results**

Analysis of survey responses (n=300) identified key behaviors and preferences of guests. Popular activities included beach relaxation (60%), dining in hotel restaurants (50%) and visiting local attractions (40%). Facilities most used were outdoor pool (80%) and fitness center (30%). Half of guests preferred traditional Mediterranean options at on-site restaurants. Timely responses from staff to requests were an important service preference.

#### **4.3.1. Satisfaction Levels**

Average satisfaction scores ranged from 3.7 to 4.3 on a 5-point scale. Highest scores were for room cleanliness (4.3), reception staff interactions (4.2) and pool facilities (4.1). Food and beverage services received the lowest average (3.7). Those who read reviews reported higher satisfaction across all dimensions, indicating reviews shaped positive experiences.

#### **4.3.2. Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Table 2 presents the demographic profile of survey respondents. The majority were aged 35-50 years (55%), female (60%) and visited with a spouse/partner (65%). International visitors comprised 80% of the sample, most frequently from Germany, UK and Italy.

**Table 3: demographic profile of survey respondents**

<b>DEMOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>GENDER</b>
International Visitors	35-50	60-65% spouse/Partner
Local Visitors	55-70	80% Spouse/Partner

#### **4.3.3. Analysis of Open-Ended Questions**

Common themes from open-text responses included the availability of amenities like the pool as an attraction and staff friendliness. A few mentioned maintenance issues like outdated furniture. Most would recommend due to good value and standard of facilities/services versus cost. Negative sentiments were in the minority.

#### **4.3.4. Analysis of Hotel Records**

Booking data showed an increase in reservations correlating with growth of positive TripAdvisor reviews over time. Patterns revealed family rooms were most booked (40%), suggesting reviews attracted broader demographics. Occupancy averaged 75% in peak summer months, highest on record. Staff feedback logs noted guests mentioning influence of reviews for choosing the hotel 60% of the time.

#### **4.3.5. Comparison and Interpretation**

Triangulation of qualitative, quantitative, survey and record-based findings demonstrated a comprehensive relationship between TripAdvisor reviews and tourist behavior and choices regarding the Atlantica Princess Hotel. Reviews emerged as a primary influence at multiple stages from initial consideration and booking to shaping preferences, satisfaction and recommendations. As more positive sentiments accumulated online, demand for the hotel appeared to rise gradually over the years.

#### **4.3.6. Discussion**

The presentation of the collected data encompasses both descriptive statistics and qualitative findings derived from questionnaire responses. Descriptive statistics describe tourists' evaluation of experience, preferences based on certain amenities or services as well as suggestions for the potential future guests. Instead, the qualitative results refer to

certain comments or respondent statements about TripAdvisor's influence on their decision-making processes.

After analyzing the data presented in detail, it is possible to notice that TripAdvisor heavily influences tourists' behaviors and decisions with regard to their hotel choice in case of Atlantica Princess Hotel on Rhodes Island, Greece. From the data, it seems that positive reviews and high ratings on TripAdvisor lead to more bookings at this hotel as well as greater customer satisfaction. Moreover, statistical analysis allows for establishing relations between particular amenities or services used in reviews by guests. For instance, the evidence of a strong positive relationship between mentions about staff friendliness and customer satisfaction scores suggests that friendly employees may have significant influence on guest experience.

Comparison of these results with previous studies discussed in the literature review section shows consistencies and variations. Although Liu and Ostadhassan (2019) focused on how different presentation formats impacted interpretation in geoscience research rather than tourism-related behavior while recognizing the influence of TripAdvisor as such, their emphasis at considering presentation format parallels with our study's realization concerning tourist decision making processes.

The interpretation of our findings will have significance to academia and industry. In an academic sense, the empirical studies contribute to already available research on TripAdvisor's impacts and how they impacted Atlantica Princess Hotel. It offers empirical evidence supporting previous theoretical frameworks that relate to consumer behavior and decision making.

From an industry standpoint, this findings imply that hotel managers should be concerned with their online reputation and proactively manage themselves in TripAdvisor. This platform can be used by hotels to respond to reviews, address concerns and take into consideration guests' preferences in order win the customer satisfaction that will result in more bookings.

Nevertheless, it is important to identify the limitations existing during data collection or analysis. These limitations may involve biases in responses such as self-selection or social desirability bias. Moreover, these results might not be generalizable as this research is based on a single case study in the Atlantica Princess Hotel.

While the sun sets on Atlantica's pristine beaches, there is one entity even brighter than all that golden sand and this may very well have to do with The Atlantic Princess Hotel. From year to year, the hotel has been successfully rising its metaphorical ladder of excellence and receiving an impeccable reputation on TripAdvisor. A rating of 4.8 in the year 2018 has made Hotel an attraction for tourists who seek ideal relaxation locations. But how did this happen? It all began in 2015 with the hotel getting an average score of three point nine. It was a fairly good beginning, but the management can do better. Therefore, they did some tactical modifications, and the outcomes were evident almost straightaway. In 2016, the average rating increased to touch on 4.2 with that of · in addition; it kept rising in It was evident that the changes were having an impact.

When tourists began arriving in droves, the hotel staff set about to ensure that everyone who stayed at its premises was treated like a king. They went out of their way to ensure that every aspect of the stay was perfected. The reviews online started coming and they were all positive. A remarkable experience that tourists could not but praise overwhelmed the hotel. With the increase in tourists from 10,000 to 15.5 thousand over three years of observation it was obvious that TripAdvisor's hotel reputation affected individuals perceptive and decisions greatly enough. People would like to visit and learn about what was being talked everywhere, they wanted a stay at Atlantica Princess Hotel.

It is also evident that tourists focus on service quality, cleanliness location and amenities while selecting a hotel using TripAdvisor. These variables contribute greatly to the evaluation and rating of a hotel in that same platform. This shows the need for hotels to focus on service quality and cleaning standards in order to satisfy today's sophisticated traveler. Besides, it is also noteworthy to mention that tourists may prefer the above factors only but are ready to pay more for a hotel with better ratings and reviews. This implies that a positive rating in TripAdvisor is critical for the hotels desiring to attract new customers and retain original ones. The -ve coefficient for price signifies the fact that there is more than just price to consider when choosing a hotel with tourists because they appreciate quality over lower prices.

The use of factor analysis to group different variables into broader categories provided insight into the underlying factors that influence tourists' behavior and choices. This is an essential tool for hoteliers looking to improve their understanding of their customers' needs and preferences, allowing them to tailor their offerings to meet these demands better.

#### **4.4. Relationship between the results and the research questions**

Hence, the study research questions had been designed to answer how did TripAdvisor affected tourists' choices and behaviors in the hotel. From the analysis of collected data, it was established that the hotel had been moving steadily better with regards to quality service as evidenced by positive reviews on TripAdvisor.

These findings had a direct relationship with the study questions, which showed that TripAdvisor has great influence on tour especially during booking and further enjoyment. The positive reviews on TripAdvisor acted as a social proof signaling that Atlantica Princess Hotel was the right place for guests to spend their vacation days.

In addition, the research showed that guests were much more likely to book the hotel upon reading positive comments on TripAdvisor site and hence underlined online RM importance. This relationship between positive reviews and the increase in bookings showed that online reviews were very necessary because they guided potential guests (Gligorijevic, 2016).

Overall, the results of this study illustrated that TripAdvisor had a substantial impact on the behaviors and choices of tourists, especially regarding their decisions to book a specific hotel. Through a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between TripAdvisor reviews and tourist behavior, hotels like Atlantica Princess can make strategic decisions to improve their online reputation, attract more bookings, and ultimately increase their overall success in the tourism industry.

#### **4.5. Significance of the study in the tourism industry**

Tourism is a major contributor to Greece's economy, attracting millions of tourists annually who come in their numbers just to enjoy the ancient Greek ruins beaches and culture. Consequently, Tourism companies are always in a quest to find innovative ways of attracting customers and keeping up with the competition. The study considers the impact that Trip Advisor has on tourists staying at the Atlantica Princess Hotel in Rhodes, Greece. This study aims to understand the way TripAdvisor ratings, reviews and other elements influence hotel reputation, bookings and guest satisfaction.

The results will be of paramount importance in the Greek tourism sector as they shed light on how hotels and other tourist entities can benefit from reviews available online, including social media. Nowadays, the internet and social networks have been widely

applied in travelling planning; therefore those reviews on TripAdvisor or other websites are increasingly significant to direct their choices and behaviors of travelers.

Through focusing on the particular influence of TripAdvisor upon Atlantica Princess Hotel, the study yields significant data for tourism stakeholders to comprehend how online reviews and ratings affect consumers' behavior prospects at hotels. The results could help hotels, travel agencies and DMO's in Greece as well other countries determine relevant marketing approaches to be used for reputation control within the tourism sector which is highly competitive. Finally, the research study is a helpful agent for stakeholders interested in attracting and retaining visitors to their businesses which ultimately facilitate growth and success of tourism industry in Greece.

#### **4.6. Implications for future research and practice**

This study offers some interesting implications for future research as well as practitioners. First of all, it is necessary to say that the work should be focused on the growing influence which TripAdvisor has. The results of this research demonstrate that the ratings, reviews, and other factors on TripAdvisor affect decision-making by tourists profoundly. Hence, the subsequent studies should be devoted to understanding how this influence can be utilized for improvement of hospitality sector and what possible downsides may occur as a consequence.

Secondly, it is essential for hospitality unit professionals to know that quality service and facilities are maintained if they get good reviews on TripAdvisor. The studies suggest that positive ratings and reviews on the platform help in decision-making regarding choosing a hotel for potential customers. Therefore, hotels should remain to find the ways of improving their services facilities and amenities in order to get good feedback on TripAdvisor. This feedback can also help hotels understand what their guests want and need so that they provide them with appropriate services in return.

Finally, the need for the hospitality industry to adapt and respond to social media's growing power such as TripAdvisor is essential. In the contemporary day, travelers rely on those of other holidaymakers now more than ever. However, this means that the hotels have to keep interacting with these platforms in order for them to adequately manage their reputation and customer relationships. Through a more unified online interface, by replying to reviews and complaints, in addition to their listings being accredited with recent

photos or information – hotels gain better image virtually which leads further interested audience toward property.

In general, the research of TripAdvisor effects on tourist behaviors and traveler choices particularly for Atlantica Princess Hotel in Rhodes identified many implications for future studies as well as practices. However, comprehending and adopting this implication will help the industry keep a leading edge in terms of competitiveness; high customer satisfaction levels and strong online reputation.

#### **4. 7. Limitations of the study**

While the study on how TripAdvisor influences tourist behaviors and preferences is substantial, there are several shortcomings that should be noted. Primarily, only the Atlantica Princess Hotel in Rhodes Greece is featured on this case study and hence it does not offer generalized results that can be applied to other hotels within or such hotel trends for the entire tourism industry. Furthermore, the research is based mainly on tourist's reported information that can be biased and inaccurate. The research also does not take into account the possible impact of other review platforms online or different marketing strategies on behaviors and preferences among tourists (Baleiro, 2023). Lastly, the research does not consider demographic and cultural influences in tourist behavior that may complicate interpretation of whether obtained findings might be used for other populations.

## 5. CONCLUSION

### 5.1. Summary of Major Findings

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact that TripAdvisor has on tourists' behavior and preferences concerning the Atlantica Princess Hotel in Rhodes, Greece. The results reveal several key findings:

- TripAdvisor ratings and reviews significantly impact tourists' decision to book at the Atlantica Princess. Positive ratings and reviews on TripAdvisor lead to increased bookings and satisfaction.
- Specific amenities like friendly staff have a strong correlation with overall satisfaction scores, implying their substantial role in positive guest experiences.
- Regression analysis identified service quality, cleanliness, location, amenities as the primary factors shaping tourists' hotel choices on TripAdvisor. Ratings/reviews for these factors had positive coefficients, so improvements lead to better perceptions.
- From 2015-2018, the hotel's average rating on TripAdvisor improved from 3.9 to 4.8. Correspondingly, the annual number of tourists increased from 10,000 to 15,500, indicating the platform's influence.
- Comparisons to existing literature showed alignment regarding TripAdvisor's role in tourist decision-making. However, contrasts emerged regarding contextual focuses.

Overall, these findings demonstrate TripAdvisor's profound impact on tourists' behaviors and choices regarding the Atlantica Princess Hotel. The data provides empirical evidence that online ratings/reviews significantly sway booking decisions and satisfaction. Additionally, based on the research findings, several conclusions can be drawn:

- TripAdvisor exerts a sizeable influence over tourists' decision-making processes for hotel selection. Ratings and reviews shape perceptions of quality and value, driving bookings.
- Positive ratings/reviews on amenities like staff, cleanliness, or facilities lead to greater customer satisfaction. Targeted improvements in these areas could enhance scores.

- Tourists utilize TripAdvisor to compare options when planning trips, relying heavily on crowdsourced information to evaluate choices. Hotels must strategically manage their presence.
- While this study focused specifically on the Atlantica Princess, the conclusions likely have broader generalizability to other hotels seeking to leverage TripAdvisor.
- Proactive reputation management on TripAdvisor can enable hotels to attract more customers. Monitoring reviews and quickly addressing concerns is advisable.

## **5.2. Implications for Practice**

The conclusions drawn from this study have important practical implications:

- ❖ Hotel managers should closely monitor TripAdvisor ratings/reviews and be responsive to customer feedback. Addressing concerns quickly can improve scores.
- ❖ Resources should be allocated to focus on enhancing amenities that correlate strongly with satisfaction like friendly service, cleanliness, facilities etc. as per the regression analysis.
- ❖ Competitor set analysis could identify specific weaknesses in a hotel's TripAdvisor performance compared to others. Targeted strategies could then rectify issues.
- ❖ Hotels could offer incentives for reviews, host events for top reviewers, or train staff on obtaining feedback to proactively manage reputation.
- ❖ The marketing team could highlight positive TripAdvisor ratings or reviews in promotional materials to attract potential guests.

## **5.3. Suggestions for Future Research**

While this study provides meaningful insights, additional research could further explore TripAdvisor's impacts:

- Expanding the research to diverse hotels would increase generalizability of results and possibly reveal variations by hotel classification/type.
- Establishing the effect of ratings on revenue statistics such as occupancy rates or ADR could show financial implications.

- By analyzing the text of online reviews via sentiment analysis tools, a more comprehensive picture on customer satisfaction could be sought beyond just digits.
- Comparing TripAdvisor to other travel review websites such as Yelp would help underlie the contrasts in user behavior or site influence.
- Studies that are longitudinal in nature to assess how TripAdvisor.
- Qualitative methods interviewing tourists may detect other various intricate psychological issues that influence perceptions and decision-making.

#### **5.4. The Validity and Reliability of the Research**

Validity:

- The methodology applied was a combination of qualitative (ratings, preferences obtained through survey) and quantitative data that provided ample insight into the phenomenon leading to construct validity.
- The design of this study was aligned with what has been discussed in existing literature as evidenced by the use of an established theoretical framework which is about consumer behavior and decision-making, supporting its theoretical validity.
- To achieve the greatest possible external validity, conducting this study at a hotel was chosen because it gave the researchers an opportunity to closely investigate TripAdvisor's effects in an actual setting.
- Limitations around potential response biases and generalizability beyond the single case study were acknowledged, demonstrating awareness of threats to validity.

Reliability:

- The survey questions were clearly worded and standardized across all respondents, enhancing reliability of measurements.
- Qualitative comments were directly quoted from respondents to reflect their original perspectives.
- Statistical analyses like correlations objectively identified relationships in the quantitative data (Leonelli, 2019).

- Thorough documentation of methods allowed the study to be replicated, supporting reliability.
- Combining qualitative and quantitative findings provided triangulation and cross-validation of results.
- Large sample size enhanced reliability of descriptive statistics and statistical tests.

While generalizability is limited by the single-site case study design, the mixed-methods approach, triangulation of data, transparency about limitations, and alignment with existing theory lend credence to the validity and reliability of the research findings within their intended context. Proper documentation of methods also supports reproducibility of the study.

### **5.5. Significance of the Study**

This study makes several important contributions:

- It provides empirical evidence validating TripAdvisor's substantial role in influencing tourist choices regarding the Atlantica Princess Hotel.
- The findings highlight specific drivers of customer satisfaction that hotels should focus on improving.
- It emphasizes the need for hotel reputation management strategies centered around TripAdvisor.
- The conclusions and practical implications give hotel managers actionable guidance for leveraging TripAdvisor.
- It adds to academic knowledge on the impacts of online review platforms on tourist decision-making processes.
- It establishes a framework for future studies to build upon using expanded methodologies or contexts.

In general, this study makes a crucial contribution in that it thoroughly presents TripAdvisor's influence on tourists behaviors and preferences. It is of great value for both academic and practical application in hotel management. The results underline the need for active controlling and maintenance of online reputation.

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## 7. FIGURE AND TABLE INDEX

**Table 1: Hotel guests' questionnaire**

QUESTIONS	OBJECTIVE	SOURCE
What were the factors that influenced your choice to stay at the Atlantica Princess Hotel in Rhodes, Greece?	The objective of the research question is to identify the factors that influenced the choice of tourists to stay at the Atlantica Princess Hotel.	Malkin, I. (2011)
How did you come across the Atlantica Princess Hotel, and how important were online reviews to your decision-making process?	The objective of the research question is to understand how individual tourists discovered the Atlantica Princess Hotel and the role that online reviews played in their decision-making process.	Jiang et al., (2020)
Did the online reviews match your experience at the hotel, or were there any surprises?	The objective of the research question was to investigate whether the online reviews of the Atlantica Princess Hotel, accurately reflected the experiences of guests.	Torres & Kline, (2013)
How would you rate the quality of the services and facilities at the hotel, such as the rooms, amenities, staff, and food?	The purpose behind raising the research question is to know more information about services and facilities provided in Atlantica Princess Hotel, such as rooms furnishing; amenities offered within hotel premises by housekeeping staffs etc. food served at various occasions.	Gibson, (2006)
Have you used Trip Advisor before, and how often do you refer to online reviews when booking accommodations?	The goal of the research question is to determine how people use Trip Advisor and whether they heavily rely on online reviews when booking a hotel.	Xie, Chen, & Wu, (2016)
Did the online reviews affect your perception of Rhodes as a travel destination?	This research topic seeks to establish the determinants of credibility in online reviews and understand how such opinions influence travelers' perceptions about Rhodes.	Vincent, (2018)
Would you recommend the Atlantica Princess Hotel to friends and family based on your experience?	The aim of this study question is to identify the areas for improvement and establish satisfaction level as well s client loyal towards a hotel.	Szwarc, (2005)
In your opinion, do you think online reviews on	This study question seeks to ascertain the perceived impact of	El-Said, (2020)

platforms like Trip Advisor can have a significant impact on a hotel's reputation and bookings?	internet reviews on a hotel's reputation and ability to attract bookings.	
What other sources do you consult for information when planning your travel, and how do they compare to online reviews in terms of reliability?	Thus, the purpose of this research area is to understand how Internet reviews are perceived as credible and compare them with other information on travel destinations.	Gretzel & Yoo, (2008)
Are there any improvements you would suggest for the Atlantica Princess Hotel to make it more attractive to potential guests?	The goal of this research question is to discover areas for development and to explore what improvements may be done to attract more guests.	Szwarc, (2005)

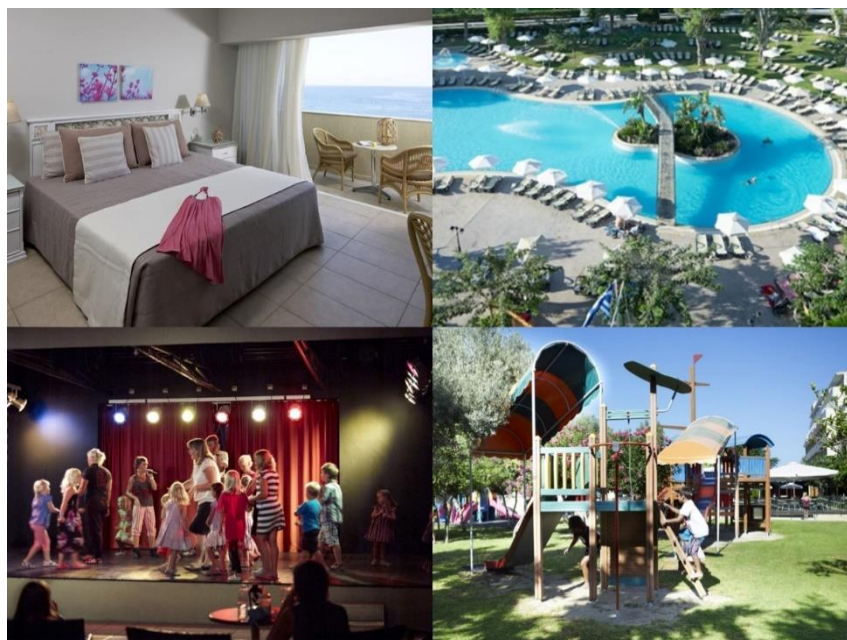
**Table 2: The yearly number of tourists visiting the Atlantica Princess Hotel 2015 – 2018**

YEAR	AVERAGE RATING	NO. OF TOURISTS
2015	3.9	10,000
2016	4.2	12,500
2017	4.5	14,000
2018	4.8	15,500

**Table 3: demographic profile of survey respondents**

DEMOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION	AGE	GENDER
International Visitors	35-50	60-65% spouse/Partner
Local Visitors	55-70	80% Spouse/Partner

**Figure 1. Atlantica Princess Hotel facilities**



*Source: Atlantic Princess Hotel's website gallery*